

**Amendments to the Claims**

1-24. (cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) A method of inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprising contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of a CCR5 binding or blocking agent, wherein the binding or blocking agent comprises ~~The method of claim 6, wherein the chemokine comprises~~ RANTES, MIP-1 $\alpha$ , or MIP1- $\beta$ .

26. (Currently Amended) A method of inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprising contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of a CCR5 binding or blocking agent, wherein the binding or blocking agent comprises a peptide corresponding to an extracellular loop of CCR5 ~~The method of claim 6, wherein~~ the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 comprises the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 5, 6 or 7.

27. (Currently Amended) A method of inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprising contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of a CCR5 binding or blocking agent, wherein the binding or blocking agent comprises a peptide corresponding to an extracellular loop of CCR5 ~~The method of claim 6, wherein~~ the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 consists of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 5, 6 or 7.

28. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprises contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of RANTES.

29. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprises contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of MIP-1 $\alpha$ .

30. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein inhibiting membrane fusion between HIV and a target cell that expresses CCR5 or between an HIV-infected cell and a CD4 positive uninfected cell that expresses CCR5, comprises contacting the target or CD4 positive cell with a fusion-inhibiting effective amount of MIP1- $\beta$ .

31. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 comprises the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 5.

32. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 comprises the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 6.

33. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 comprises the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 7.

34. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 consists of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 5.

35. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 consists of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 6.

36. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the peptide corresponding to the extracellular loop of CCR5 consists of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 7.